Otford Parish Council

July/August Newsletter 2012
No 214

Kent and South & South East England Village of the Year 2002
Clerk: Ms. B. Hambrook
Assistant Clerk Sue Stephenson – Newsletter Editor
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otfordpc@btinternet.com

Parish Council
For those interested in all the activities of OPC, the minutes of meetings are available in
the library, and all minutes, agendas and newsletters can be obtained via the web (also
available in the library). Copies of the Helplines Directory can be printed off for residents
if required. They can all be read via http://www.otford.info/parishcouncil. The next
meetings will be on 9th July and 13th August at 7.30pm in the Club Room of Otford Village
Hall. Contact details of Councillors can also be found on the website.

Chairman’s Report
By the time that this report is published, the Queens Jubilee will be but
a memory - one that the majority of us will cherish and one which we are
unlikely to see repeated in our lifetime or even our grandchildren’s
lifetime. Well done and congratulations to all those that organised the
many events over the long weekend and to the helpers and the unseen
background workers that made the events happen. In the main, the weather was not too
bad and the events either took place as planned or were rapidly transferred to another
venue - as far as I can remember none of them were cancelled, not even the street parties.
Well done Otfordians!
This month I thought I would try and list some of the reasons that in the face of adversity
make Great Britain “Great”

• Our modesty - we never boast how great we are - apart from the Jubilee with all its
  pomp and ceremony
• Our politeness - no matter how irritated we get, we are always too British to complain
• The great British Summer - don’t forget the brolly
• Driving on the left - the right way to do it
• No matter where you are in Britain you are never far from a pub
• Any excuse for a cup of tea
• We don’t moan because we are miserable, we moan because it makes us happy
• Our international language - makes travelling abroad a doddle
• The great British countryside - unless you are stuck behind a tractor
Freedom of speech
Some of the best (Free) museums in the world
We apologise far too much – sorry for that
The national tendency to cheer the underdog and ridicule the mighty
Crisps – apparently we eat more of them than the rest of Europe put together
We know the importance of standing in a good queue
Saying “I’m fine” no matter how unwell we are
A love of mowing the lawn
The weather, although we get less of it than almost anywhere, it’s still the major talking point
Morris dancing – we knew how to move it in the 15th century
Allotments – our own little patch of countryside in the towns and cities
Tolerating nearly everything, but banning hosepipes
Our talent, be it artists, musicians, actors or just dancing dogs
Pantomimes – the jokes never seem to get old – he’s behind you
The Sat Nav – try finding Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch
The pound and our reluctance to adopt the Euro – just as well.
Marmite – you either love it or hate it.
The Earl of Sandwich’s ground-breaking concept of putting a savoury filling between two slices of bread
And anything else you can think of

The Annual Report 2011/12
It has been another very busy year for councillors, and particularly so for the clerks, with Brenda achieving her CiLCA Award after only one year in office. I would like to thank both Brenda and Sue (who compiles the newsletter almost single handed) for all the invaluable help they have given me during the past year.

As some of you are aware Council Agendas, Minutes and Newsletters are now all placed on the local Otford web-site Otford.net (so ably managed by John Hubbard). The Helpline Directory has also been added and is regularly updated. Hard copies can be obtained from the parish office for those without computers.

We are now twinned with Neufchatel-Hardelot - its residents have a real wish to become involved with Otford. Cllr Jane Lawrey has masterminded much of the work involved.

I summarise below the activities of the Otford Parish Council Committees in the year.

Planning
Over 70 applications have been examined and SDC have agreed with 72% of our recommendations.
The planning committees are held twice a month at School House and members of the public are welcome to attend.
Highways

The committee continues to liaise with Kent Highway Services to highlight improvements required to ensure the safety of road users and pedestrians. They have had the following successes:

- Obtaining dropped-kerbs, which have been installed at the shopping parade.
- KHS have sanctioned our “Village Gateway Project” subject to their conditions and scrutiny.
- Getting Speedwatch up and running and agreeing with the police a further 12 sites from which it can be operated.

Services

The Committee have carried out H&S reviews and Fire Risks of the office, sports pavilions and other assets

- Organised redecoration of the offices
- Carried out repairs to several fences and replaced the Rye Lane Bus Shelter
- Organised the Diamond Jubilee week-end activities

Finance

Savings were made in the year particularly in the cleaning of the public toilets. The precept for 2012/13 has increased by 8% over the previous year as we continue to build up reserves for the resurfacing of the Car Park and to increase reserves which had been depleted following the reconstruction of the pond. Cemetery fees have been increased to bring us in line with other cemeteries in the locality.

During the year the Council gratefully received grants totalling £650 from the fete committee and £368 from otford.net towards community projects.

Recreation

The Committee organised a joint venture with the Environment Committee in November, staging a “Community Tree Planting” scheme at Hale Lane Recreation Ground to enhance the area.

- Arranged to give Otford Youth Football Club exclusive use of Hale Lane Pavilion, who will pay the running cost.
- Obtained £7,000 of funding grants towards the provision of a “Children’s Play Area” at Hale Lane Recreation ground. Having secured these funds an application has now been made to a major funder.
- Dealt with major water damage to the Eric Dilley pavilion following a burst pipe in such a way that there was minimum disruption to sports activities.
- Funded summer play activities by obtaining a grant from Kent County Councillor Nick Chard

Environment

The Committee have organised a number of working parties this year to improve green areas in the village and arranged with McDonalds to pick up litter at the cemetery car park and along the Sevenoaks Road at no cost to the parish.
Statement of Accounts 2011-12

Council income is derived from the parish precept from local residents (collected via council tax), fees and charges for the use of council facilities, cemetery fees and grants or funding application awards to support activities.

The Council does not receive any money from either central government or business rates. Council accounts are inspected by an Internal Auditor and submitted annually to the Audit Commission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Ended</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>General Fund</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 Mar 2011</td>
<td>166,684.72</td>
<td>67,214.89</td>
<td>31,047.80</td>
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<td>166,684.72</td>
<td>91,604.23</td>
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Council Responsibilities

Otford Parish Council is the closest level of government to the community of Otford. The Council comprises of 11 members who are elected every four years at local elections. The Council has six committees and their responsibilities are shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finance and General Purposes</th>
<th>Finance: specific issues e.g. burial ground; matters requiring urgent attention; Heritage Centre</th>
<th>Cllr. Edwards-Winser (Chairman), RFO (Clerk), Cllrs. Mrs. Lawrey, Whitehead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>The Pond, The Green, The Palace Tower, Palace Approach and Field, Oxenhill Woods, Union Flag, Car Park, The Chalk Pit, General Litter</td>
<td>Cllr. Mrs. Ward (Chairman), Cllrs. Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Lawrey, Mrs. Marsh,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
<td>Car Park, and liaise with Kent Highways on roads, footpaths &amp; footways.</td>
<td>Cllr. Edwards-Winser (Chairman), Cllrs. Cracknell, Knight Leicester, Mrs. Howe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Planning applications and related questions. Search SDC Website Planning portal for Otford planning applications</td>
<td>Cllr. Whitehead (Chairman), Cllrs. Cracknell, Edwards-Winser, Verrall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Maintenance and supervision of recreation grounds (Including children’s play areas) allotments, recreational areas</td>
<td>Cllr. Knight (Chairman), Cllrs. Cracknell, Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Marsh, Mrs. Howe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Services not covered by any other committee, including Care of the elderly, Emergency Team, Charman’s Charity, Transportation, Bus stops, Notice boards, Public Toilets</td>
<td>Cllr. Mrs. Lawrey (Chairman), Cllrs. Knight, Mrs Ward, Leicester, Verrall</td>
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</table>

**Parish Councillors Contact Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chairman</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>John Edwards-Winser</strong></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Councillors</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Douglas G. Cracknell</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mrs. Mary Evans</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mrs. Jackie Howe</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Richard Knight</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mrs. H. Jane Lawrey</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Car Park Meeting
The meeting held on Friday 29th June was very well attended and behaved. Cllr Martin Whitehead had produced a comprehensive power-point demonstration to explain the background, problems and options. It was a positive meeting and the Parish Council appreciates all the many suggestions that were put forward by residents. All of them will be followed up and progress or otherwise, as it happens, will be reported in the newsletter.

Dog Poo Flag Days
Parish Councillors and staff walked the Recreation Ground on these days to flag ‘crime scenes’ and pick up dog poo.
12th June - 42 flags were placed
13th June - 14 flags were placed
14th June - 8 flags were placed
18th June - 15 flags were placed
This is unacceptable with a number of dog bins and other bins provided there really should be none.
We know that the majority of people pick up and take bags with them and we thank you but who are the guilty ones? This is a public recreation ground where children play and picnic and people play sport. We will be doing spot checks from now on and the Dog Warden will visit and if you are caught you can and will be fined £1000. This is a lovely village so come on lets keep our Recreation Ground free from dog poo.

Community Warden Surgery
Paul holds his weekly surgery to discuss any problems and community issues at School House on Tuesdays between 11am and 12 noon. Come and see him. Paul can also be contacted on 07813 713366.

Newsletter deliverer
Would anyone be willing to deliver newsletters in Pilgrims Way West every month? It only takes about 30 minutes. If you feel that you could do this please contact the office on 01959 524808. Also if you would be willing to deliver newsletters anywhere in the village as a reserve for holiday periods please also contact the office.
Line the Streets for the Olympic Torch

On **Friday 20th July** Sevenoaks District will proudly host the Olympic Torch Relay. You will have an opportunity to 'line the streets' to cheer on the inspirational torchbearers when they run through Seal, Sevenoaks, Riverhead and Bessels Green. With the world watching it's our moment to shine. The Olympic Games are taking place in the UK for the first time since 1948 and for many it will be their first chance to see the Torch, the iconic symbol of the Games. The Torch will begin its journey in Seal High Street at 12.20pm. It will travel along the A25 towards Sevenoaks, turning left at the Bat & Ball crossroads (approx 12.40pm) up St John’s Hill and Dartford Roads then turning right into Pembroke Road (approx 12.56pm). From there it will turn right into London Road, past Sevenoaks Railway Station (approx 1.05pm) to the roundabout at Riverhead (approx 1.16pm) when it will turn left finishing its journey in Bessels Green around 1.22pm. Spectators will get the best views of the torch from the left hand-side of the road as traffic may still pass on the opposite side. Up to 10 minutes before the Torch Relay arrives, the Olympic Sponsoring Partners will pass through handing out commemorative keepsakes to spectators on the left hand-side of the route. Where possible, spectators are being encouraged to travel to the Torch relay on foot or by public transport as there’s likely to be a greater demand for parking spaces than is usual. The Torch will pass Sevenoaks Railway Station and very close to Bat & Ball Railway Station. Sevenoaks Bus Station is also close to the route. It is likely that there may be changes for local buses around the time of the Torch relay. Residents are advised to check with bus operators before they set out. For more information visit www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/2012 or call 01732 227000

Summer Activities - Otford Recreation Ground

Play Place is a not for profit community company which will be delivering fun activities for children, young people and families across a number of Sevenoaks Parish Councils in 2012. Play Place will be working in Otford on the High Street Recreation Ground. The youth team of experienced workers will be on the Recreation ground on **Wednesdays 25th July, 8th August and 22nd August** from 10.30am to 1.30pm.

Allotments

This year has been a disappointing one for all gardeners' and particularly for allotment gardens as attention to keeping plots tidy and productive has been difficult. However, this is a golden opportunity for new gardeners to start from scratch and get a plot just as you want it - why not give it a try while a few plots are available. Give Barbara Hine a ring on 01732 459779 if you are interested and she can give you a little more detail. You of course have had an opportunity to have a look around on the Open Morning on **Saturday 21st July** to get an idea of what allotment gardening is all about.

Otford Library - Free Craft Session

There will be a FREE craft session in Otford Library on **Saturday 14th July** from 10am to 12 noon when you can make decorated initials. Booking is essential to secure a place. Please call Angela on 01959 522488.
Skyride
Join a free weekly bike ride in your area. Register at goskyryide.com. Every weekend in August there is a Sky Ride Local in the Sevenoaks District. Rides are of various lengths to suit all abilities. For details of the rides go to the diary page of http://www.sevenoaks-cycleforum.org.uk

Front Garden Competition
The Otford Gardeners’ Society on behalf of the Parish Council will again be organising the Annual Otford Front Garden competition. Preliminary judging will be taking place during July & August when committee members will be walking around the village taking notes. The competition will again be based on the front gardens that would take the eye of a stranger to the village, without him or her having to look over or around a hedge, wall or fence.

Otford Art Group - Sale
Otford Art Group will be selling their paintings in The Coffee Lounge at The Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks from [Monday 30th July to Saturday 18th August]. Open everyday and admission is free.

Help for Otford Scouts
There are around 75 local boys and girls in Otford Scouts but it now urgently needs some help from the local community. Partly because Ray Groom, who has been the local group scout leader for 10 years, is leaving in July, we need to fill the following positions.

Group Scout Leader - This person coordinates the four scouting sections in Otford and liaises with the Sevenoaks District Scouts. This requires some previous knowledge of Scouting, although training is available.

Chairman - This person is in charge of the admin side of Otford Scouts and would chair around 5 committee meetings a year and be responsible for matters to do with the Scout Hut. Anyone who would be willing to help please contact Ray Groom on 01959 525413.

Also the Scouts will be holding a working party at the Scout Hut by Otford Station to tidy up the area. Any resident who would be willing to give a hand please go along on Saturday 14th July.

Twinning
Otford Twinning is organising a Coach trip to Bologne and Neufchatel-Hardelot on Saturday 6th October to visit our 'twins'. Please contact Jane Lawrey on 01959 522360 for further details.

Secure your registration now for the Police & Crime Commissioner Election
Residents will soon receive voter registration forms through their letterbox which will ask them to ensure their vote is in place for this year’s Police and Crime Commissioner Election on 15th November. Residents can also secure their voter registration for the Kent County Council Election on 2nd May 2013. Sevenoaks District Council will send out the voter registration forms from 29th June 2012 and existing unchanged registrations can once more be confirmed online, by
free phone or by using the popular text service, all of which saves bringing or sending the forms back to the Council. Why is the annual voter registration form arriving two months early in 2012? - The election for a Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent will now take place on 15th November 2012; this is when we would ordinarily be compiling the annually revised register of electors. This year’s annually revised register of electors has to be published on 16th October 2012. So, make sure you are registered in time for the 15th November election.

The best way to secure your registration is to respond to the enclosed form immediately. Apply on your form if you wish to vote by post. A simple help sheet that explains how to use these services and answers the most frequently asked questions will be enclosed with the registration form. Only those people whose names are on the register will be able to vote. Households that have not received a form by late July, or have any questions about completing the form, can e-mail elreg@sevenoaks.gov.uk or phone 01732 227000.

Otford Heritage Centre
Otford Heritage Centre - Has anybody any books/pamphlets/leaflets on the local area that they no longer need? We are collecting books for a reference/study section and would be grateful for any donations.

There are two new photographic displays - 'The 1950s' and 'The visit of the Duke of Kent'

Picture of the Month
The painting on show in the Heritage Centre for July & August is by Rod Shelton. He says that he only started painting seriously some six years ago, his favourite medium being oils. When you start painting you try to produce everything like a photograph and if it doesn’t look like that then it can’t be any good. It takes time but it slowly dawns that colour and the effect that a brush stroke may produce, make it far more interesting to look at rather than have a perfect image. It is then that painting starts to be fun. He is, he says, only part of the way there but even the animation of flowers in the wind can produce an exciting effect on canvas.

Otford Bridge Club
The club meets every Friday (except bank holidays) at 7.30pm in the Otford Church Hall. Anybody looking for a friendly club in which to play is very welcome. Tea/Coffee and biscuits are provided. Please contact Sally or Graham on 01474 812250 for more information.

Sevenoaks Embroiderer’s Guild
The next meeting will take place on Saturday 28th July in Otford Village Memorial Hall. It will be an all day workshop with Ann Parr-Stitching on Metal. The meetings start at 10am and 2pm and end with tea and cakes at about 4pm. For further information please contact Sylvia Grafton on 01732 452117.

(Please note there is NO meeting in August)
Quilling Guild
The next meeting will be on **Saturday 1st September** between 10am and 4.30pm in the Main Hall of Otford Village Memorial Hall.

**Otford Oast WI**
The meetings take place on the 3rd Thursday of each month starting at 9.30am in Otford Village Memorial Hall. The next meeting will be on **12th July** when they will ‘Relax with Yoga’ with Brenda Hambrook. The August meeting will be a Summer Outing. There is a crèche and the first visit is free. Do join them. Contact Julie Stevens on 01732 450618 for more details.

**Otford Afternoon WI**
Meetings are held in the Otford Village Memorial Hall at 2pm on the 2nd Tuesday each month. The next meeting will be on **10th July** when Mary Campion will talk about the ‘Roman Occupation of UK’. The August meeting is a members only educational trip. Visitors are very welcome, and further details can be found on the Otford Village web site at www.otford.info with the link to the WI. Contact Kath Larkin on 01959 522355 for more details.

**Otford Evening WI**
The next meeting is on **12th July** when Jilly Halcrow will talk about ‘The History of Food & Drink and Table Manners’ and then on **9th August** Rosemary Sassoon will talk about ‘Preserving the Past’. On the 20th June the members held a 1950’s style tea party to celebrate the Jubilee, where fortunately the sun shone.
Meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in Otford Village Memorial Hall. For more information please contact Sandra Thomas on 0208 402 4634.

**Police Matters**
PCSO Jane Wright will be holding surgery in the following place and if people have any questions or problems she will be willing to discuss them
- McDonalds , Otford Road , on **Tuesday 17th July** between 13:00-13:45
If you have any issues you need to discuss or need to report a crime then call the non emergency number 101

**Otford Methodist Church Wednesday Afternoon Women’s Fellowship**
Meetings are at 2.30pm in the Church Hall. Phone Rosemary Cracknell on 01959 522325 for details / transport.

July - 18th - Garden Tea / August - 1st - Garden Tea, 15th - Garden Tea, 29th - Garden Tea

**Hospice of Hope Events**
Hoe Down & Hog Roast **Saturday 14th July** 5.00 - 9.00pm
Dosey doe your partner at our barn dance and hog roast by generous invitation of Sir Richard & Lady Plender, The Old Rectory, Sundridge.
This is a fun occasion for all the family!
Tickets £15 per adult, £8 for children under 10, contact carole@hospicesofhope.co.uk 01959 525110
Eynsford Music Festival September 1st 2012

With a basic idea in our heads, and all a little fed up with spending hundreds of pounds at the big festivals, we started our own!

We’re in our second year now and starting to get quite good at it. So if you’re after expensive beer, smelly toilets, corporate sponsors and the Spice Girls that’s not us….sorry!

What we can offer you is a small, beautiful farm in Eynsford, next to an ancient ruined castle on the river Darent. We are a family and we want yours to join us, so bring the kids, u14’s are only five quid! We have some fantastic local bands and headliners, namely the Kings Ov Leon and the Upbeat Beatles to get you dancing. The food is hot, the lager is cold and cheap (because we want you to come back lots!) and the ale is local and straight from the cask.

We donate ALL profits to local charities so you’ll be helping out with a good cause too. So have a look around our website eynsfordmusicfestival.co.uk, join the mailing list and check us out on Facebook. But most of all come down to Eynsford, and have a great family day out.

Planning

The following applications have been considered by the Parish Council in June. For more information, please contact the Parish Clerk or the Head of Development Services, Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent on 01732 227000

a. New applications

SE/12/00805 Hopgarden Farm, Telston Lane
Use of site for a single gypsy family with provision of a mobile home, touring caravan, utility building and installation of septic tank

SE/12/01031 51 Greenhill Road
Demolition of existing garage. Erection of a first floor extension to side of property together with the construction of a glazed link leading to a two storey structure incorporating a garage and gym with games room over.

SE/12/01206 Land adj Mount Path Cottage, Clan Cottage and High Point, Pilgrims Way East
Replace hoggin/roadstone with block pavers on trackway from Pilgrims Way east to Clan Cottage as per condition 3 of SE/09/00602 with minor amendments to assist vehicle movement and enhance pedestrian safety

SE/12/01287 2 Vestry Cottages, Old Otford Road
Erection of single storey conservatory to the rear of the property.

SE/12/01363 43 Telston Lane
Demolition of existing garage and erection of two storey side extension

SE/12/01397 10 Orchard Road
Demolition of existing rear conservatory and erection of a single storey rear extension, garage conversion and new entrance with pitched roof.

SE/12/01358 29 High Street
The addition of the rear dormer.

SE/12/01444 Byways, Rye Lane
Erection of two storey side and single storey rear extension
b. Results received

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Number</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Decision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE/12/00356</td>
<td>20 Rye Lane</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation of electric gate</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00608</td>
<td>30 Greenhill Road</td>
<td>Refused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demolition of existing dwelling and garages, erection of replacement dwelling with attached double garage.</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00790</td>
<td>57 Knighton Road</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single storey front extension</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE/12/00847</td>
<td>40 High Street</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Removal of conservatory at rear and erection of a single storey rear extension. Excavation of part of the rear garden ands erection of retaining walls to provide an extended patio area</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00850</td>
<td>High Point, Coombe Road</td>
<td>Refused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demolition of detached double garage and erection of a 1 bedroom lodge style dwelling house with parking bay to side</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00897</td>
<td>Park Farm, High Street</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Details pursuant to condition 6 (fencing and gates) of planning permission SE/11/01668/FUL</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00907</td>
<td>26 Ryecroft Road</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Erection of a single storey rear extension, front porch and rear dormer</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/00916</td>
<td>40 The Charne</td>
<td>Refused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single storey rear extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>SE/12/01000</td>
<td>4 Shinecroft, Rye Lane</td>
<td>Allowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erection of a single storey front extension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c. Appeals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Number</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE/11/02806</td>
<td>The Old Oast House, Shoreham Road</td>
<td>Erection of a two storey side extension, first floor rear extension and rear canopy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. Work to trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Number</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SE/12/01359/WTPO</td>
<td>Hawthorns, Station Road</td>
<td>Various work to trees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHATEVER THE WEATHER - HAPPY HOLIDAYS